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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/728,237	12/03/2003	Jean-Paul Mardon	12928/100022	7515

7590 03/09/2006

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Washington, DC 20036-3425

EXAMINER

SHEEHAN, JOHN P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1742

DATE MAILED: 03/09/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/728,237

Applicant(s)

MARDON ET AL.

Examiner

John P. Sheehan

Art Unit

1742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 7-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 7-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/647,339.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/18/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). The certified copy has been filed in parent Application No. 09/647,339, filed on November 27, 2000.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:
 - I. The first paragraph of the specification, added by the Preliminary Amendment submitted December 3, 2003, is objected to in that the current status of the US parent application, 09/647,339, is not stated.Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities:
 - I. In claim 1, line 7, the word, "var" appears to be a misspelling of the word bar.Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 7 to 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sabol et al. (Sabol, US Patent No. 4,649,023, cited in the IDS submitted March 18, 2004) in view of Rebeyrolle et al. (Rebeyrolle, US Patent No. 5,832,050, cited in the IDS submitted March 18, 2004).

Sabol teaches a method of making tubes for use in nuclear reactors (Abstract and column 1, lines 35 to 45) from zirconium base alloys comprising 0.5 to 2.0% niobium, up to 1.5% tin, and up to 0.25% iron, chromium or vanadium (Abstract). Sabol also teaches that the disclosed zirconium alloys can contain 1000-1600 ppm oxygen, carbon in amounts less than 100 ppm and silicon in an amount of less than 80 ppm. Sabol teaches a process comprising heating the zirconium alloy to a temperature of 950 to 1000°C, quenching the alloy, extruding the alloy at a temperature of about 700°C, cold rolling the alloy with intermediate annealing at a temperature of about 600°C and final annealing the alloy at a temperature of less than about 650°C (see column 3, lines 10 to 60 and column 6, lines 49 and 50). Thus, with the exception of the sulfur content of the zirconium alloy, Sabol teaches the applicants' claimed process.

Rebeyrolle teaches that 8 to 100 ppm and preferably 8 to 30 ppm of sulfur (Abstract) improves the creep behavior and the corrosion resistance (column 8, lines 19 to 34) of zirconium alloys that are used on nuclear reactors (Abstract).

One of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have been motivated to add sulfur to Sabol's zirconium alloy so as to improve the creep behavior and the corrosion resistance of zirconium Sabol's disclosed alloy.

Double Patenting

6. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 7 to 11 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 13 to 16 of copending Application No. 10/885,927. Although the conflicting claims are not identical,

Art Unit: 1742

they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed process recited in these two sets of claims overlaps. A prima facie case of obviousness exists when the ranges of a claimed invention overlap the ranges disclosed in the prior art In re Geisler 43 USPQ2d 1365 (Fed. Cir. 1997); In re Woodruff, 16 USPQ2d 1934 (CCPA 1976); In re Malagari, 182 USPQ 549, 553 (CCPA 1974) and MPEP 2144.05. .

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

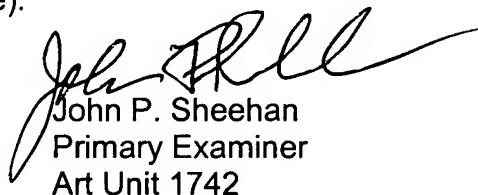
Claims 7 to 11 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 9 of U.S. Patent No. 6,863,475. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed process recited in these two sets of claims overlaps. A prima facie case of obviousness exists when the ranges of a claimed invention overlap the ranges disclosed in the prior art In re Geisler 43 USPQ2d 1365 (Fed. Cir. 1997); In re Woodruff, 16 USPQ2d 1934 (CCPA 1976); In re Malagari, 182 USPQ 549, 553 (CCPA 1974) and MPEP 2144.05.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John P. Sheehan whose telephone number is (571) 272-1249. The examiner can normally be reached on T-F (6:45-4:30) Second Monday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on (571) 272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


John P. Sheehan
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1742

jps